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THE PROPRIETAIRE.

A FRENCH *propriétaire* and an English landlord are two varieties of the same species, but with numerous characteristics in common, and numerous differences of a very marked character. My readers have doubtless met with many opportunities of studying the race in England. I wish to afford them an occasion to judge this section of humanity in France. I have not been long in France, but still I have had several opportunities of analysing those it has been the lot of my family to encounter. I only see the droll side of the question, being somewhat of a spoilt girl, and never interfering with details of this nature. I some day may sketch my Boulogne impressions on the subject, but at present I confine myself to Paris, or rather to its outskirts.

Our first *propriétaire* was an Englishman, and though a little Frankish, out of respect for old England, I shall pass him over. Our next was a priest, who kept tame snails as delicacies, and professed a great wish to change both his profession and position. I think he was a Jesuit. He had all the character of one; plausible, cunning, always agreeing with the last speaker—while another priest said of him that he never told truth except by mistake; and yet he was the best of the lot. Our next was a little proprietor—one of those people who are servile as slaves to get you to do anything, and insolent in proportion when their object is gained. He was a very funny man though—short, heavy, and ungainly; it was truly comical to see him teaching his little daughter how to dance, all the while crying, "More grace! more grace!" The next was an antiquated specimen of a legitimist soldier. He seemed to have but three ideas; his love for Henry V., his goats, and his own private plan for the extinction of the National Debt of France. He was a little withered old man, though hale and hearty, rising at five to feed and milk his goats, to tend his garden, and survey his little property. But whether picking his fruit, or milking his goats, or digging his garden, or washing out his garden apron, or what not, he was always thinking of his favourite plan. I am not a great talker, but I have heard him expounding his idea to a very democratic friend of ours, with prodigious energy. But our friend declares he is always as wise at the end of the conversation as at the beginning. But all this is diverging from the special proprietor, whom I wish to notice, and of whom all the while I am thinking.

Some years back there came to Paris an English lady and her daughter, Mrs. and Miss Robinson. They were very genteel people, were quiet and unassuming in manners, and they took, in a house in the Champs Elysees, a very moderate lodging, consisting of one bed-room, one sitting-room, and a kitchen. They did allow themselves a piano, at which Julia Robinson sat a great many hours every day, practising with wonderful energy. Of an evening they would usually take a long walk, returning home to a late tea, after which they sat and talked or read until bed-time. They were excessively economical and prudent in their habits, spending very little money, and paying their rent monthly to the *concierge* with scrupulous exactness. They had brought letters of introduction, which they did not present at first; but taking a walk one afternoon, they called on a Madame Sellier, who was very polite, and asked them to join a little reception the following evening.

Mrs. and Miss Robinson went, and found a very pleasant circle. The old people talked, or played whist, the young people danced, some good-natured person playing; Julia volunteered to take the piano, to the great delight of all, for they soon found that she played beautifully.

After the first quadrille, a very handsome young man, a Monsieur Rousset, whom Madame Sellier seemed to treat both with respect and affection, came up and asked Julia to dance. She acquiesced, and entered into conversation with her partner. She was a little timid at first about her French, but by degrees grew more courageous, and finding herself understood, talked with spirit and animation. M. Rousset questioned her about Paris, was pleased to find that, like all

English people, she liked it very much. By accident she found out that the young man spoke English, which made her more easy, for now she wished to say something about England, and she required the fluency of her own tongue to give vent to all her love of her dear country.

M. Rousset listened politely, but incredulously, believing, with most Frenchmen, that ours—the most beautiful country in Europe—is a great iron and crockery shop, a land where the sun is never seen, with a capital so drenched by fog, that two-thirds of your time you cannot find your way along the streets without a lanthorn. When Julia praised up the scenery of Scotland, of Devonshire, of the lakes, and even the minor scenery of Richmond, Blackheath, Windsor Castle, and other places along dear old Father Thames, he smiled, but preferred Switzerland, the Pyrenees, &c.; still he pressed the young English lady to go on—professing himself deeply interested. Miss Robinson spent a very pleasant evening, and when M. Rousset offered to conduct her and her mother home, she somehow thought the Champs Elysees had never looked so picturesque, the moon so bright. But then they were being lauded by a handsome and pleasant young Frenchman, which, perhaps, accounted for the difference.

He left them in sight of their house, which had been indicated to him by Madame Sellier, expressed a wish and a hope to meet again on the following Thursday, and went away. Mrs. Robinson smiled as Julia highly praised her new acquaintance, shook her head at the very thought of her daughter feeling a *penchant* for a Frenchman, and then the subject dropped; for they had a subject of more moment to talk about. Their scanty remittance had been due some days, and no advice had come of why there had been delay. They felt very anxious, and determined to walk down to the bank next day, and see if it had been paid in without a letter being written. About eleven o'clock, next day, they were dressed and out. They went down the Champs Elysees, and had reached the Rue de Berry, when an open carriage drew up and a gentleman leaped out.

"Ladies," cried M. Rousset, as if quite charmed at the meeting, "you seem going to town. Allow me to leave you where you are going."

"You are very kind," said Mrs. Robinson; "we shall be intruding."

"Madame, I pray you to say nothing of the kind." And taking Mrs. Robinson's arm, he led her to the carriage, followed by Julia—crying, after obtaining the direction of her banker, "Rue Lafitte."

It was a beautiful morning, and the ladies forgot their anxiety for a moment, while listening to the cheerful, light-some chatter of the young Frenchman. They reached their destination in a few moments, it seemed; and then M. Rousset jumped out, helped them to descend, and again spoke:—

"Madame, I am at my journey's end also. I live at No. 7, you are at No. 1: my carriage is at your orders. Henri, you will wait for these ladies, and take them where they please." And, without giving them time to refuse, he hurried away, after a low bow.

"How very attentive," said Mrs. Robinson.

"Very kind, indeed," replied Julia, and in they went.

The money had not come—they expected it; and yet they turned away with despair in their hearts. Their whole income was but seventy-two pounds a year—little enough; but still, if paid regularly, sufficient. But they had been fifteen days now without a remittance.

"I am sadly afraid there is something wrong," said Mrs. Robinson, as they rolled home in their luxurious carriage.

"I am afraid there is. Perhaps Mr. Pelham is ill. I must work hard at my piano, and look out for pupils."

"My poor girl! You are courageous and industrious, but I cannot bear the thought of your working for me."

"But, mamma, if this small remnant of our fortune fails us, I must work for myself."

"Alas! it is but too true, dear girl; but let us hope for the best."

Mr. Pelham was dead. A letter was waiting for them,

when they got home. He had died suddenly, leaving his affairs in a very complicated state. They could pay no money now, but they had very little doubt that ultimately all would be right. The writer concluded by saying, that if an advance of five pounds was of any use, he would be happy to place it at their disposal. This was an awful blow. Mrs. Robinson knew too well the result of complicated affairs, not to dread the worst. The five pounds was looked upon, therefore, as a last resource, and was to be husbanded accordingly. The rent was paid, and the rest was put by, to be drawn forth as occasion required. Julia turned with firm energy to the piano. It was resolved to continue their visits to Madame Sellier's, as she appeared a kindly woman, and might find the young pianist some pupils. Accordingly, for several Thursdays they renewed their visits, and M. Rousset his attentions. He devoted himself almost wholly to Julia, who found, in the mean time, one or two pupils among the English in Paris.

About the end of a month after the news had arrived of the death of Mr. Pelham, they received a card of adieu from M. Rousset, a formal *P. P. C.*; and the following Thursday they found he had gone to Italy, Madame Sellier said, in the most unexpected manner. Julia said nothing, but she felt a little low-spirited. She had, in five evenings, got to like the intelligent and intellectual conversation of the young man; and there was no one to replace him. She took care, too, now to volunteer always for the piano, and as this pleased most of the young ladies present, she met with little opposition. Madame Sellier had found her one pupil, and out of gratitude Julia continued to go to her parties; but they were no longer so pleasant as they were at first—she took no French lessons now. Altogether, there was something wanting.

Still no money, and a month's rent is due. The *conciierge*, a dry, thin, hard-featured man, made little by such quiet, genteel lodgers, who gave no trouble, and was, accordingly, not

over polite in his manner. He gruffly, at the end of the week, insisted upon the rent being forthcoming, under penalty of expulsion. "The *propriétaire*," he said, "never allowed any debts in the house. It was 'pay' or 'go,' leaving behind all they had to pay as much of the rent due as possible." Mrs. Robinson coolly informed the man that he should be paid that day, and showed him the door.

"But, mamma, how are you going to pay?"

"I must sell my bracelets, the last of my husband's presents, my dear girl."

"But must it be?"

"I could borrow money on them, as we learnt to do unfortunately in England."

"Do not sell them, mamma," cried Julia, earnestly; "better days may come."

"Amen! may your words prove true."

The money was raised, and the rent was paid for that month. But no news came from England, and they had to exist on the remnant of what they had raised, and from the poor pittance paid for music lessons. Mrs. Robinson at last, after another month of suffering, fell ill. Now was the character of Julia manifested in all its force. She nursed her mother, she did all the little household duties, she gave her lessons, she called round on Madame Sellier, and other persons to whom she had letters of introduction, in search of fresh pupils; in a word, she did all that was in the power of a young person of her age to do. Medicine was necessary, and medical advice; but the sacrifice imposed to procure this was terrible indeed. Julia, unknown to her mother, all but starved three days, after giving a fee to a doctor, and buying the medicine ordered. At the end of that time, some money came in from one of her pupils, and her mother being better, Julia prepared a nice but humble dinner, of which Mrs. Robinson partook.

ANCIENT CASTLES IN IRELAND.—BLARNEY CASTLE, ETC.

"The antiquities of Ireland," says the well-known author of "Cork and the South of Ireland," "afford a rich and extensive field for research. Her isolation and sequestered position, her freedom from Roman conquest and subjugation, in the period of Rome's highest power, has left to the character of her Celtic archæology features peculiarly her own; whilst the acquaintance of her early pagan population with letters, and the large amount of extant literature which has descended to us, capable of throwing so much light on the condition of her ancient races, have invested the whole subject with an importance and interest surpassing that of the antiquities of any other western nation in Europe.

"This broad and inviting field of research has been hitherto but imperfectly and partially wrought, seldom indeed by the scientific inquirer, and but too often only by incompetent or prejudiced labourers. There has been abundance of wild and indiscriminating enthusiasm at one side; and again, on the contrary, an over-sceptical theorising rationalism, embarrassing and obstructing its useful culture. What effect the vicinity of Roman civilisation produced on the arts and social condition of this country we have no present evidence to determine. The vast variety of implements, utensils, and objects of art disinterred from time to time, and the numerous monuments which still subsist, afford no means to inform us as to the extent or nature of such influence, if any. The character of Irish remains, indeed, is more impressed with an Oriental than a Greek or Roman origin, and tends to sustain the eastern descent claimed by the Irish senachies (or clans) for their ancestry. Some few Roman coins alone, sparingly discovered, tell of a limited Roman intercourse. In like manner the actual presence of the northmen on the Irish soil seems to have been nearly as ineffective. Occupying, for above two centuries, a considerable portion of the island, and especially of its maritime cities, it is strange that they have left hardly any traces or vestiges behind them. Beyond a solitary tower

in Waterford, and a few silver coins, the Irish antiquary cannot really point to a single memorial (save the record of their devastations) on the page of its history. Whilst in England and Scotland, and even in the Isle of Man, the sculptured cross and the Runic inscription still remain to identify their sway, in Ireland neither the one nor the other throughout the whole breadth and length of the land can be found.

"Ireland, then, has no remains of Roman magnificence to exhibit, no vast temples, amphitheatres, or aqueducts; nor does she possess any of those antiquities which the northern archæologist could identify as of Scandinavian origin; but she has, on the other hand, many relics of early Phœnician intercourse—vestiges of a religion, an architecture, a language, and a literature, claiming derivation and affinity with the remote East.

"The antiquities of Ireland may be classified into three grand divisions—the primæval or pagan, early Christian, and mediæval. In the first are comprised stone monuments appertaining to the Druidical religion, such as circles, cromlechs, pillars, holes, and rocking-stones, rock-basins, &c., raths, cahirs, duns; the fortified residences of the ancient inhabitants, consisting of great earth-works, or Cyclopean stone enclosures, lofty round towers, used at once for sepulchral and religious purposes; stones inscribed with the virgular character, called Ogham, dome-roofed structures, round, oblong, and square, with massive walls constructed of uncemented stones. The cromlech, or Druidical altar, is a monument well known in these islands and in northern Europe, and not unfrequently found in India and America. It is occasionally met with placed within circles of pillar-stones, but it is often difficult to distinguish between it and the kistvaen. The latter monument, when divested of its covering of earth or stone, is to all appearance a perfect cromlech; but there are many of the latter which, from the nature of their sites and peculiarity of